NEWS
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
David A. Paterson, Governor
Alexander B. Grannis, Commissioner

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EMERALD ASH BORER INFESTATION DISCOVERED IN ADDITIONAL WOODLANDS OF CATTARAUGUS COUNTY

Infestation Still Within Quarantine Area

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Commissioner Pete Grannis today announced that additional trees in the Randolph (Cattaraugus County) area have been discovered to be infested with Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), a tree-killing beetle first confirmed in New York last year. DEC foresters have detected emerging insects on private woodlands south of Interstate 86, but within the previously established EAB quarantine area.

The EAB is a small but destructive beetle that infests and kills North American ash tree species, including green, white, black and blue ash. Since it was first discovered in Michigan in 2002, EAB has spread to 13 states and two Canadian provinces and is responsible for the destruction of 70 million trees in the U.S. alone. After the insect was discovered in Cattaraugus County last year, a multi-agency effort was undertaken to attempt to control its spread. New York has more than 900 million ash trees, representing about 7 percent of all trees in the state, and all are at risk should this invasive, exotic pest become established.

“We are intensifying surveys in the immediate area of these new discoveries and deploying more EAB-detection traps as we try to further define the infestation and slow the spread of the insect,” Commissioner Grannis said. “DEC will continue to investigate for any additional signs of the beetle in the quarantine area and statewide and to work cooperatively with our partner agencies.”

This is just the latest in a series of invasive species detections across New York, including the Asian Longhorned Beetle, Sirex woodwasp, didymo, zebra mussels, and Eurasian water milfoil. The influx has prompted the state to strengthen regulations, increase educational outreach and encourage ways of limiting the unintentional spread of these potentially devastating pests throughout the state.

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THE EMERALD ASH BORER

The EAB has metallic green wing covers and a coppery red or purple abdomen; it is small enough to fit easily on a penny (photos: **http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us/CAPS/pdf/Emerald%20Ash%20Borer%20Poster.pdf** and **http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7253.html**).

Damage is caused by the larvae, which feed in tunnels called galleries in the phloem just below the bark. The serpentine galleries disrupt water and nutrient transport, causing branches, and eventually the entire tree, to die. Adult beetles leave distinctive D-shaped exit holes in the outer bark of the branches and the trunk. Other signs of infection include tree canopy dieback, yellowing, extensive sprouting from the roots and trunk and browning of leaves. Infested trees may also exhibit woodpecker damage from larvae extraction. Typically, the insects emerge as adults from beneath tree bark in early summer.

The primary way EAB spreads is when firewood and wood products are moved from one place to another.

WHAT IS BEING DONE

Numerous agencies are working cooperatively on this issue: DEC, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), the U.S. Forest Service and the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, NYS Department of Transportation and NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Cornell Cooperative Extension and the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry.

Foresters and other researchers have commenced a thorough survey of trees and will deploy a more intensive trapping effort in the surrounding area to assess the extent and age of the infestation. Information from the survey will help determine the response strategy, which could range from removing trees to using pesticides selectively to girdling ash to create "trap trees" that attract the beetles. Also, the quarantine remains in effect (**http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/47761.html**).

DEC's firewood regulations prohibiting out-of-state transport of untreated firewood and intra-state movement of untreated firewood more than 50 miles remain in effect and are an extremely important tool to contain this damaging pest. (**http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/28722.html**). Many of New York State's forests and parklands -- including Allegany State Park which is near the recent EAB discovery -- are high-risk areas due to firewood movement.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

DEC urges the following steps to keep EAB from spreading to other areas of the state:

- Leave all firewood at home - please do not bring it to campgrounds or parks.
- Buy firewood at the campground or from a local vendor - ask for a receipt or label that has the firewood's local source.
- If you want to transport firewood within New York State:
    - It must have a receipt or label that has the firewood's source and it must remain within 50 miles of that source.

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- For firewood not purchased (i.e., cut from your own property), you must have a "Self-Issued Certificate of Source," and it must be sourced within 50 miles of your destination.
- Only firewood labeled as meeting New York's heat treatment standards to kill pests (kiln-dried) may be transported into the state and further than 50 miles from the firewood's source.

· Watch for signs of infestation in ash trees. If you suspect an ash tree could be infested by EAB, go to the websites below for more information. If damage is consistent with the known symptoms of EAB infestation, report suspected damage to the state by calling 1-866-640-0652 for appropriate action as time and resources allow.

For more information, visit the following web pages:
www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/emerald_ash_b/index.shtml
http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us/CAPS/pdf/Emerald%20Ash%20Borer%20Poster.pdf
http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7253.html

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